

Connecticut State Firefighters Association

Education Committee

Meeting minutes

October 23, 2008 – 19:00

Wethersfield Fire Department

Company #3, Kelleher Court

The meeting was called to order at 19:16 with the following representatives present:

Burrville Fire School – Richard Winn, Robert Norton, Jr.
Eastern Connecticut Fire School – Al Hawkins, Les Shull, Eric Deschamps
Fairfield Regional Fire School – Chris Tracy
Hartford County Regional Fire School – Chet Haber, Mike Jepeal
Middlesex County Fire School - Fred Dudek
New Haven Fire Academy – Chuck Howitt
Stamford Regional Fire School – Tony Conte
Valley Fire Chiefs’ Regional Fire School - Peter Wols, Jr.
Wolcott State Fire School - Paul Perrotti, Steve Veneziano
Commission on Fire Prevention and Control – Rich Nicol
Connecticut State Firefighters Association - Charles Stankye, Jr., Scott Potter
Connecticut Fire Academy – Jeff Morrissette
Guest: Don Ouillette - Ct. Department of Public Works
Guest: Mark Omasta - Danbury Fire Department

Minutes of the September meeting were distributed. Chief Herald was omitted from the attendance list for the September meeting. Motion by Chet Haber seconded by Rich Nicol to accept the minutes as corrected. Motion Carried.

1. Status of properties acquisitions

Eastern Connecticut Fire School - Don indicated that there had been some correspondence via email between personnel from D.P.W. and Rogers Corporation. Everything seems to be on track for the property transfer. This will probably take place spring of 2009.

Valley Fire Chief’s Regional Fire School - The sales agreement for purchase of the Beacon Falls property has been forwarded to O.P.M. for review. This could be ready for action at the December bond commission meeting.

Hartford County School - Still remaining question about additional acreage in order to accommodate the project. Commissioner Curtis indicated that the additional one quarter acre shouldn’t be a problem. Tectron has a contract for the Hartford design. They had promised a sketch in six weeks. More than six weeks has passed and there is still no sketch.

2. Other projects status

New Haven Regional Fire Academy - Design CDs are complete. Du Bose Associates has turned over all of their documentation on the project. The Engineer is two months behind schedule with the pre construction documents. The project won’t be ready for bond commission action until well into 2009.

Burrville and Fairfield schools - Mid November for advertisement for “criteria architect” to facilitate the design-build process. D.P.W. has begun to utilize the design-build process for other projects.

Chris Tracy commented favorably on his experiences with the design-build process.

Jeff Morrissette reported that he has received some questions about the five year plan from personnel from O.P.M.

3. Other items from membership

Bonding bill - The general opinion of those present is that we should lobby for the additional \$40 million for the 2009 legislative session. This committee needs to line up sponsors and co-sponsors.

Peter Wols asked if we thought that the \$40 million would be enough.

Don Ouillette responded that he felt that the project could be successfully completed with the additional \$40 million.

Paul Perrotti introduced Steven Veneziano as the new Director of Training for the Wolcott School.

Because of the state deficit there is a proposal to eliminate \$200,000 from the firefighter training funds. This would require special legislation. Jeff Morrissette reported that of the Firefighter I students certified during this past fiscal year, 400 of them never sought reimbursement through the training account. That equates to \$100,000. There were less than 800 firefighters certified to the Firefighter I level. Less than half have applied for and received the reimbursement funds from this account. Jeff also reported that the money allocated for the recruit school was near 100% utilized by municipalities. Under the current system the reimbursement must be paid out within one year of certification.

Jeff also reported that the CFPC web site will include information on the progress testing for Haz-Mat Operational Certification level. Mike Jepeal noted that the practical skills testing process is working quite well. There was a brief discussion about the logistics of the hazardous materials testing.

There was also a discussion about class A building construction. Most engineering firms dealing with burn building construction are recommending that lining systems should only be installed at the ceiling and should not extend down the walls. The wall application of these systems seems to hold too much heat in the burn room for the safety of the trainees.

Mark Omasta asked the committee how the members viewed the attempt by Danbury to become a regional fire school.

Chris Tracy made a motion that this committee resolve to support the effort by Danbury Fire Department because: 1. the Danbury region is not well served by the existing system of regional fire schools. 2. the fire service demographic in the Danbury area needs reasonable access to a training facility 3. since the Danbury Fire Department has made their facility available for regional use they should have access to state budgetary support. Chet Haber seconded the motion. The motion carried with unanimous support.

4. Next meeting date

December 4, 2008 at Wethersfield Company #3

Submitted by Al Hawkins